

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for protecting a memory space from external access,
comprising the steps of:

storing in a location in memory a plurality of lock bits, each associated
5 with a separate logical portion of the memory space and determinative as to the access
thereof for a predetermined operation thereon;

detecting a request for access to a location in the memory space for
operating thereon;

10 comparing the requested operation with the associated lock bit in the
associated logical portion and determining if access is allowed for the requested
operation; and

if allowed, performing the requested operation.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined operation is a read of
an addressable location in the associated logical portion.

15 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined operation is a write
of an addressable location in the associated logical portion.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the predetermined operation is an erase
of the associated logical portion for an addressable location therein.

20 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of storing in a location the
plurality of lock bits comprises of storing in a variable location in the memory the
plurality of lock bits and storing the lock bit location in a known location in the
memory, such that in the step of comparing, the location of the lock bits is first read
from the memory and then the lock bits read from the memory.

6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the predetermined operation is an erase of the lock bits.

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein the predetermined operation of erasing the lock bits requires that each of the lower logical portions be erased before the top
5 most portion that contains the lock bits

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